

[24 November, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Withdrawal of the Seeds Bill, 2004

268. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to withdraw the Seeds Bills, 2004 as it does not allow use of traditional seeds;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) There is proposal to withdraw the Seeds Bill, 2004. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture, to which the bill had been referred, has submitted its report to the Hon'ble Speaker. The Seeds Bill, 2004 fully protects the traditional rights of farmers including the right to use farm saved seeds.

Decline in purchasing power of farmers

269. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the 59th report of the National Sample Survey, the crores of farmers of the country have to live with only Rs. 8/- a day;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a heavy decline in the purchasing power of the farmers is also major cause of suicide;

(c) the reaction of Government on the news of suicides now in Bulandshahr area of Uttar Pradesh after Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh;

(d) the details of farmers committing suicide in the above three States and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the details of the scheme formulated by Government in view of the above incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) The major reasons for farmers committing suicide as reported by the State Governments are crop failure, indebtedness, drought and social and economic insecurity.

The number of suicide by farmers because of agriculture-related reasons as reported by the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra since the year 2003, are as follows:

Andhra Pradesh			Maharashtra		
2003-04	-	393	2003-04	-	170
2004-05	-	1126	2004-05	-	620
2005-06	-	300	2005-06	-	572
2006-07	-	11	2006-07	-	746
(upto 31.5.2006)			(upto June 30)		

Uttar Pradesh Government has reported that there have been six cases of suicide by farmers in the Bundelkhand area of the State, but none of these cases are found related to the recovery of agricultural loans or to any coercive methods. Details on other parts of the State are awaited from the State Government.

(e) The Government of India has recently approved a rehabilitation package for 31 suicide prone Districts in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, involving a total amount of Rs. 16978.69 crore. The package aims at establishing a sustainable and viable farming and livelihood support system through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, crop centric approach to agriculture, assured irrigation facilities, watershed management, better extension and farming support services, improved marketing facilities and subsidiary income opportunities through horticulture, livestock, dairying, fisheries etc.

Relief package for Vidarbha

270. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI YASHWANT SINHA:
SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the relief package announced for the Vidarbha region after the visit of the Prime Minister;

(b) whether Government are cognizant of the continued cases of suicide by farmers ever since the visit of the Prime Minister to that region;